Introduction to 1306 Technical Communication

The technical Communication course is designed to give you the opportunity to learn and to use the communication skills you will need in your professional career. These skills include the ability to define and analyze a writing or speaking situation; the ability to develop a logical, clear response to that situation; and the ability to present in a clear way (either written, and/or graphically) a response which is comprehensible and suitable to your reader or listener.

Primary Texts:
Technical Communication – A Reader-Centered Approach – 4th Edition, by Paul V. Anderson, Harcourt Brace, 1999.
Technical Writing – A Reader-Centered Approach – 3rd Edition, by Paul V. Anderson, Harcourt Brace, 1995.

Chapters	**Titles**	**Hours**
1	Introduction etc.	1.5
3	Defining Objectives	2.0
4	Planning to Meet Reader's Info. Needs	1.5
5	Planning Your Persuasive Strategies	1.5
6	Conducting Research	1.0
7	Drafting Paragraphs, Sections & Chapters	1.5
8	Beginning a Communication	1.5
9	Ending a Communication	1.5
10	Creating an Effective Style	1.5
11	Drafting Visual Aids	2.0
12	Designing Pages	1.5
13	Evaluating Drafts	1.5
15	Long Reports, Progress Reports	6.0
19	Proposals	1.5
17	Creating Communications with a Team	1.0
16	Oral Presentations	7.5
Appendix A	Letters, Memos, E-mail, Facsimiles, Short Reports	4.5

Grading:		
	Assignments	40%
	Term Tests	30%
	Report	30%

Please note that this is a continuous assessment subject – that is, there is no final examination. Your final mark is determined based on the assignments given, the term tests, and the final report that you will do throughout the semester. Because of this, **you must complete and submit all assignments**.

EVALUATION

Since technical Communication concern, first and foremost, an audience, there are no "right" or "wrong" answers. In this sense, it is not an exact science, even though to use language (which is a tool) demands knowledge of its logic and operation. Consequently, you will be evaluated according to your proficiency in two areas: style and content.

In addition, you will be expected to:

- clearly define your **communication purpose**, that is, *why* you are writing or speaking , and what you want to accomplish by doing so;
- demonstrate an **awareness of an audience,** that is, *who* will read or hear what you have to say and *what* they need to know;
- be **grammatically accurate** as well as **clear, comprehensible, precise,** and **emphatic** in your communication;
- provide technical illustrations which are both appropriate and well-explained, for, as engineers will tell you, data equals communication (not just numbers);
- clearly formulate the problem and establish technical criteria which will lead to an objective, technical evaluation of an engineering topic.

Therefore, each piece of work will be evaluated in this way, and it will be assigned a mark based on the general letter grades shown below:

A [excellent, 80% or over]

The material is well explained and effectively illustrated; it is interesting and comprehensible; the analysis is thorough, thoughtful and probing as well as stylistically clear and emphatic. On the job, this piece of work would be forwarded to a client [value of 4.0].

B+ [very good, 76-79%]

The material itself and the analysis of it are interesting and accurate, but the analysis may at times be less detailed, less probing than an "A" piece of work. As well, poor organization and style may it times affect readability. Nevertheless, the document would be sent were you on the job because it is a solid analysis. [value 3.5].

B [good, 70-75%]

The material is interesting, but it is at times unduly complicated by poor style or poor organization; emphasis may be weak or misplaced, and explanations may be unclear and imprecise. On the job, a “B” report would be sent back to the writer for further revision [value 3.0].

C+ [satisfactory, 66-69%]

There is some detailed explanation of the material, but data may be left to stand alone without sufficient explanation; precision and clarity may be lacking, and too many other stylistic or grammatical flaws may interfere with reading or listening. The audience must at times do the communicator's work for him or her. Once again, the document would be sent back to the writer for revision [value 2.5].

C [adequate, 60-65%]

Here, the subject matter is not always presented in a detailed, coherent, organized way, and the audience is left with a general, but sketchy, idea of the material. Nor does style help. Too often the reader or listener must do the work by providing the necessary grammar to make things comprehensible or by interpreting the material because of sketchy explanations. Were you to produce a "C" document on the job, it would be sent back for substantial revision [value 2.0].

D [marginal, 50-59%]

The subject matter itself may be interesting, but the student presents it in such a careless way as to make it disorganized, sketchy and inaccurate. There is no clearly defined purpose and no apparent awareness of a reader. As well, it is grammatically imprecise. All in all, it is a "rush job" – one which should not be done on the job [value 1.0].

VARIOUS SUBMISSION LAWS:

These "laws" are carved in stone, so beware of them and of the repercussions should you "break" them.

1. DUE DATES

Assignments are due on the *date specified,* not before, not after. Written assignments will be handed in to the lecturer at the location specified by the lecturer.

2. REQUESTS FOR EXTENSIONS

Students wishing an extension on a due date should make the request *in writing* at least *TWO* days **before the due date** and receive written permission from the lecturer. Extensions will be given only if there are extenuating circumstances (such as illness), and normally will be given for 1 week beyond the due date.

3. REQUESTS FOR RE-READS

Students assignments which have been graded and returned will not be discussed either during the class or immediately after the class. You are expected to read through the assignment again, as well as the comments, and then make an appointment to see your lecturer.

Any student who wishes a written or oral assignment to be re-evaluated must prepare a *written statement* explaining why he/she wants the assignment to be re-considered by someone else. Wanting a higher grade is not a sufficient reason!

These requests, along with the assignment in question, should be submitted to the lecturer *within 2 school days* after the assignment has been returned. For example, if the assignment has been returned on Wednesday, the written request should be submitted by Friday of that same week.

Requests for re-reads after this date cannot be considered. Do not wait until the end of the term to request a re-read!!

4. LATE ASSIGNMNETS

Late assignments are defined as those assignment which are submitted within 1 week after the due date and which have not been granted a "request for extension". Late assignments will be accepted for grading only *1 week* following the due date. In addition, late assignment will lose *one full letter grade*. For example, a late "C" assignment will be marked down to a "D".

Assignments submitted later than 1 week following the due date will automatically receive a 0, but will not be considered as missing assignments. Late assignments will only be accepted until 1 week after the due date. After that, they will be considered "missing assignments".

5. MISSING ASSIGNMENTS

Students must submit all assignments for grading. Students who do not submit all assignments will ***FAIL*** the course because they have failed to do all of the work. You **must** "write out of 100%" in order to pass the course!!

6. ATTENDANCE

THE Faculty of Engineering is strict about attendance, and like all other engineering courses, you must attend all the lectures.

Some assignments are in-class assignments. Therefore, missing a lecture runs the risk of missing an in-class assignment. You should therefore advise the lecturer in advance if you are unable to attend a class (this will be counted as an excused absence).

7. BACK-UP COPIES

Make sure that you keep a copy of all your written work. This is very important in the case that an assignment goes missing. In the working world, a copy of anything sent to a client is kept in a job file in the case that the client does not receive the original, or if the matter needs to be referred to in the future.

TEACHING PLAN
1306 Technical Communication

Week	Study content	Reading	Assignments
1	a) Introduction to Course b) Communication & Your Career	Mat'l from Advantage Chapter 1	Assignment 1 – Forklift – Ch 1
2	a) Memo Format b) Defining your objectives	Appendix A Chapter 3	Assignment 2 Forklift Memo
3	a) Introduction to Project & Creating Communications with a team b) Letter format	Handbook Chapter 17 Appendix A	Assignment 3 Announcing the Smoking Ban
4	a) Meeting The Reader's Informational Needs b) Writing a Proposal	Chapter 4 Chapter 19	Assignment 4 Memo Requesting time off to take course
5	a) Planning Your Persuasive Strategies b) Conducting Research Focus Ethics – Crediting Your Source	Chapter 5 Chapter 6	Assignment 5 Drug-testing Memo
6	a) Drafting Paragraphs, Sections & Chapters b) Progress Reports	Chapter 7 Pg 506	Proposal for Final Report Due
7	a) Beginning a communication b) Test No.1	Chapter 8 Chapters 1,3 -7	Assignment 6 Unsolicited Report
8	a) Ending a communication b) Creating an Effective Style	Chapter 9 Chapter 10	
9	a) Drafting Visual Aids b) Drafting Visual Aids	Chapter 11	Progress Report Due
10	a) Designing Pages and Documents b) Documenting Your Sources	Chapter 12 Appendix B	Assignment 6 Due
11	a) Oral Presentations b) Test No.2	Chapter 16 Chapters 8 - 12	
12	a) Evaluating Drafts b) Communicating Electronically	Chapter 13 Chapter 15	
13	Presentations of Final Report		Final Written Report Due

Notes:

1) Lecture notes are available on-line.
2) It is highly recommended that the student read the relevant chapters to add to the lecture notes given and for further understanding of the topic taught.
3) Assignment descriptions are available on-line.
4) This is a very intense course that requires a lot of work – so please come to class with the notes downloaded and, if possible, read ahead.